

V. *Notes on some British species of Oxypoda, with descriptions of new species.* By DAVID SHARP, M.B.

[Read 6th March, 1871.]

IN offering some descriptions of new species of *Oxypoda* to the Society, I feel that some words of apology are due; the species of this genus being already in such a state of confusion, that it will certainly be correctly considered that an entire revision of the genus is required, rather than descriptions of isolated species. The difficulty, but at the same time, the absolute necessity, of inspecting the actual types of the authors of species in this genus, prevents me from undertaking the former task. And as all the efforts to identify the species here described, of myself and other British Entomologists, have failed, I feel myself entitled to describe, and so furnish them with names (perhaps temporary in some cases).

*O. SPECTABILIS.* This was founded by Märkel on a colour-variety of *Aleochara ruficornis*, Gyll.; as, however, there was a prior and different *Aleochara ruficornis*, Grav., Gyllenhal's name cannot be adopted, and Märkel's name had better be taken for that of the species.

*O. UMBRATA*, Grav. Much confusion has existed as to this, the name having been applied by Erichson to a different species from that recognized by Gyllenhal as the *O. umbrata* of Grav. Kraatz has already cleared this up, by giving another name (*humidula*) to the Erichsonian *umbrata*. But still another error remains, for Erichson described the true *umbrata*, under the name of *cuniculina*, and, moreover, under this name, it appears to me, that he confounded two species. I give herewith a description of the one I suppose to be new.

*O. PECTITA*, nov. sp. Elongata, sericeo-pubescent, opaca fusco-nigra, elytris paulo dilutioribus, antennarum basi, palpisque obscuro testaceis, pedibus testaceis; dense subtilissimeque punctato, thorace obsolete canaliculato. Long.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lin.

*O. cuniculina*, Er., ex parte (forte).

Allied to *O. umbrata*, Grav. (Gyll., Th.), and about the same size, but as broad in the middle, with the

thorax narrower, and less transverse, and having an obsolete, but always more or less distinct, central longitudinal channel, the hind-body less pointed at the extremity, and the thorax and elytra not quite so finely punctured. The antennæ are pitchy in colour, with the basal joint yellowish, and the next pitchy-yellow; they are thickened towards the apex, the third joint is distinctly shorter than the second, the fourth joint is smaller than the others, and about as long as broad, joints 6-10 are slightly transverse. The head is blackish, about half as broad as the elytra; the thorax is about half as broad again as it is long; it is convex transversely, but not longitudinally, it has an indistinct central longitudinal channel, and is densely and finely punctured and pubescent (owing to the channel, this pubescence has the appearance of being combed or parted on each side). The elytra are rather lighter in colour than the head and thorax, are about one-third longer than the latter, and are densely and finely punctured. The hind-body, though distinctly narrowed to the apex, is not very pointed, it is throughout very finely and very densely punctured, the extremity, and sometimes the hind margins, of the segments, being ferruginous. The legs are yellow. Distributed throughout England and Scotland, but rather rare.

The next species is very different from any other I am acquainted with.

*O. EDINENSIS*, nov. sp. Brevior, nigra, subnitida, antennarum basi, thorace, elytrisq̃ue obscure ferrugineis, pedibus testaceis; abdomine apicem versus subangustato, dense subtiliter punctata, elytris thorace paulo longioribus. Long.  $1\frac{1}{3}$  lin.

*Obs.* Statura fere *O. lentulæ*, Er., sed magis nitida, et colore dilutiore, elytris brevioribus, capiteq̃ue angustiore distincta.

The antennæ are pitchy in colour, sometimes a little paler at the base, they are but slightly thickened towards the apex, third joint slightly shorter than the second, fourth a little smaller than the fifth, 6-10 slightly transverse, eleventh joint scarcely so long as the two preceding together. The head is pitchy, or pitchy-black, more than half as broad as the elytra, closely and finely punctured, rather shining; the palpi are yellowish. The thorax is as

broad as the elytra, rounded at the sides, one-half broader than long, with a very indistinct central channel, finely and closely punctured, but rather shining. The elytra are scarcely longer than the thorax, of an obscure brownish colour, rather shining, closely and finely punctured. The hind-body is but little narrowed towards the apex, is extremely densely and finely punctured, but not altogether dull. The legs are yellowish.

A series of this species was captured some years ago, near Edinburgh, by Dr. McNab, and myself. Mr. Crotch has sent it to some of the continental entomologists, but it has not been identified.

*O. VERECUNDA*, nov. sp. Obscure testacea, abdomine medio nigricante, pedibus testaceis, dense subtilissime punctata, opaca sat elongata, abdomine apicem versus angustato. Long.  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lin.

A rather narrow dull species, of a dusky testaceous colour, with the middle of the hind-body darker, and the legs yellow. The antennæ are moderately long, not stout, a little thickened towards the apex, of a dirty yellowish colour, yellow at the base, basal joints slender, second considerably longer than the third, 4th, 5th, and 6th differing but little from one another, each a little broader than the preceding one, 7-10 transverse, eleventh joint large, about as long as the two preceding together. Head rather more than half the width of the thorax, closely and finely punctured, the palpi yellowish. Thorax rather narrowed to the front, about one-half broader than long, without channel, closely and very finely punctured, finely but distinctly pubescent, and rendered dull by this pubescence. Elytra a little longer than the thorax, very closely and finely punctured and pubescent. Hind-body narrowed towards the apex, but not extremely so, ferruginous at the base, blackish in the middle, yellowish at the extremity, extremely finely and densely punctured, near the extremity on the upper-side with well-marked black outstanding setæ. Legs yellow, moderately long and slender.

This insect possesses no particularly striking character, and seeing the confusion prevailing in the genus, I omit comparison with other species (as I should thus admit two elements of uncertainty in place of one into my

reader's chance of identifying it), but will remark, that its nearest ally in this country is the *O. exoleta* of our collections.

It is not common, but I have taken it near London, and in the Fens.

*O. NIGRINA*, Wat. It has been attempted by M. Fauvel to identify this species with the *sericea* of Heer, but, according to Kraatz, *sericea*, Heer, is probably the *umbrata* of Grav. At any rate, Mr. Waterhouse has supplied us with a good name for the species, which we need not abandon till it is satisfactorily identified with some prior species.

*O. EXIGUA*. M. Fauvel has also stated, that a British specimen sent under this name is rather *O. investigatorum*, of Kraatz; but Mr. Rye subsequently sent the specimen so identified to Kraatz, who states that it is not his *investigatorum*. It seems to me not improbable that it is the true *O. exigua* of Er. At any rate, it had better stand under that name at present.

*O. RECONDITA*, Kr. The species, designated as *O. lucens*, Muls., in Mr. Waterhouse's catalogue, has been identified with *O. recondita*, Kr., by Mr. Crotch. It agrees, at any rate, better with the latter description than with that of Mulsant.

*O. WATERHOUSEI*, Rye, = *O. nigrofusca*, Wat. This species also has not yet been reconciled with a continental one. The name under which Mr. Waterhouse described it has been changed, because of a prior species of the name by Stephens. Stephens was so extremely careless, as to describe in his 'Illustrations' only a few pages from one another, two insects under the name of *Aleochara nigro-fusca*; the first (Vol. V. p. 129) is quite worthless, and not an *Oxyptoda* (probably not, at least); the second (Vol. V. p. 150) might, possibly, be a description of a small immature *O. longiuscula*; in Stephens' 'Manual,' this latter *A. nigrofusca* has been referred to the genus *Oxyptoda*, the description being abbreviated, and rendered worthless, *O. longiuscula*, moreover, being described but a few lines further on. I cannot but regret that Mr. Waterhouse's name has been changed on account of such a confusion of rubbish.

*O. RIPARIA*, Fair. 1859 (*nec* Th. 1855). This name must be changed as above indicated, and I propose for it the name of *O. mutata*, and subjoin a diagnosis of it.

*O. MUTATA*. Elongata, rufo ferruginea, abdomine medio nigricante, antennis pedibusque testaceis, dense fortiter, subrugulose-punctata, abdomine apicem versus paulo angustato. Long.  $1\frac{1}{3}$  lin.

This species is distinguished from all our other British species by its stronger and dense punctuation. Fairmaire describes the head as black, but I do not find it so in our British examples.

*O. BRACHYPTERA*, Steph. Elongata, subparallela, haud nitida, rufo-ferruginea, abdomine medio late nigricante, dense, subtiliter punctata, elytris thorace paulo brevioribus, fereque angustioribus. Long. 1 lin.

*Aleochara brachyptera*, Steph. Ill. Brit. Ent. V. p. 128.

*Oxyptoda forticornis*, Fair. Ann. Fr. 1859, p. 37 (forte).

Of an elongate, narrow, and rather parallel form, but with the extremity of the abdomen distinctly narrowed. The antennæ and legs are yellowish; the head, thorax, and elytra of an obscure reddish colour; the hind-body reddish at the base, and at the extremity, black in the middle. The antennæ are rather long and stout for the size of the insect, a little thickened towards the apex, the basal joints being stout; the second joint much longer than the third, the third triangular, being much narrowed at the base, fourth joint slightly transverse, 5-10 strongly so, eleventh joint long and stout, quite as long as the two preceding together. Head rather broad, much narrower than the thorax. Thorax nearly twice as broad as it is long, not much rounded at the sides, but a little rounded and narrowed towards the anterior angles, thickly and finely punctured with a short pubescence; the elytra are rather shorter than the thorax, and even a little narrower than it, closely and finely punctured, but rather more coarsely than the thorax; hind-body densely and finely punctured with a close, not altogether fine pubescence; the setæ of the extremity small and indistinct.

This little species is clearly the *Aleochara brachyptera* of Stephens' description above referred to. It must be very

close to *O. ferruginea*, Er., but even if it prove identical, Stephens' description and name have the priority. Fairmaire's description of *O. forticornis*, applies so accurately to it, that I think there is little doubt of its being the same species, though it is referred to a vastly different one in Harold's catalogue.

*O. TARDA*, nov. sp. Opaca, subparallela, nigra, thorace elytrisque obscure ferrugineis, antennis, pedibus, abdominisque apice obscure testaceis, dense subtiliter punctata; elytris thoracis longitudinis. Long.  $1\frac{1}{4}$  lin.

Closely allied to the preceding species, but larger, darker in colour, with the antennæ scarcely so large, for the size of the insect; the elytra a little longer, and the base of the hind-body not paler than the middle: in all other respects similar. The thorax is variable in colour, being sometimes obscurely ferruginous, sometimes nearly black.

All the specimens I have seen of this species have been captured in the salt marshes near Dumfries.

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